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MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Deputy Director (Support)

SUBJECT: Loss of Experienced Employees

1. This memorandum is for your information.
2. Recently, all Office Heads in the DDI and DDS Areas, Area Division and Senior Staff Chiefs in DDP, and other Senior Agency Officials were asked to review their current losses of staff personnel in grades GS-11 and above (see Tab A) and to comment on:
 - a. The extent to which their retention of a capable staff is threatened by offers from outside employment.
 - b. Indications that any specific employers were recruiting systematically for Agency personnel.
 - c. Countermeasures which might be useful to prevent losses.
3. Replies received (Tabs DDI, DDP, DDS) in summary state:
 - a. Attrition is generally low and little cause for alarm. Some losses reported were mutually beneficial to the employees and Agency. The Chief, FE Division alone expresses serious concern over the number of experienced employees departing to enter private industry.
 - b. No evidence is available that any outside employers were raiding Agency talent. Scattered offers from companies such as Eastman Kodak, Standard Oil, and Aramco were reported.
4. However, several officials anticipated future losses of promising younger officers unless positive action is taken to provide more certain advancement opportunities than today exist, e.g.:

Deputy Chief, WE - "A number of our capable, up-and-coming young officers have expressed concern over the relatively slow turn-over and promotion in the high grades and have questioned whether in the long run they are wise to continue an Agency career. However, as yet their future in the Agency appears sufficiently bright that they are not actively looking for alternate employment opportunities. If the opportunities for orderly Agency advancement become progressively more difficult, it is believed that we will lose a number of our more capable young officers."

Chief, FI Staff - "From conversations with some personnel who have left or are planning to leave, it is very clear that one of the main reasons for seeking their fortunes elsewhere has been a feeling that the Agency is constipated in its senior ranks and that opportunities for advancement

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are not as plentiful as in former years. This feeling is no doubt partially inspired or aggravated by recent emphasis on ceilings, etc. Coupled with this feeling seems to be an equally prevalent one that pay scales are better in outside pursuits, over the long haul, than they are within the Agency. I do not suggest that they are correct in this feeling, only that the feeling exists. In some cases, separations have come as the result of the feeling of the individual that the work being performed by the Agency is too inhibiting to the individual's full talents and aspirations."


Director of Communications - "Currently this Office is becoming increasingly concerned with the threatened loss of experienced GS-9 employees who for lack of promotional opportunities are finding outside offers more attractive. The limitations imposed by the present personnel ceiling will, we believe, continue to make the retention of our more promising employees more difficult. Moreover, a large number of companies competing with this Agency for high caliber electronic engineers and technicians are located on the west coast or in Florida where the climate and living conditions in general are such as to place them in a more advantageous position for recruiting career employees."

5. Among the solutions to retain a competent staff, the Deputy Chief, SR Division, suggests that the "Agency's continuing effort to improve personnel administration is an adequate approach to the "loss" problem." The Chief, FE Division, reiterates his previous recommendation that the Agency establish:

- a. A firm selection-out system.
- b. A clear policy of directed assignments.
- c. Parity with State Department Foreign Service in salary and retirement benefits.
- d. Outlets for outstanding officers when they reach 45 to 55.

It will be noted that recent action has been taken to put into effect his first two recommendations. An improved Agency pay plan was approved in principle by the Career Council on 27 March 1958 and "early retirement" legislation is high on the priority list for future legislative programs. In the meantime, this Office will work closely with FE Division and the Clandestine Services Career Service to give special attention to the staffing of FE Division with sufficient competent personnel to discharge adequately its assigned mission.

6. Except as above indicated, no change in our planned program of improving Agency personnel administration seems necessary. We shall, however, continue to examine carefully the reasons behind the departure of each experienced employee and take action to counter any trends which could endanger our retention of a competent and sufficient staff.


Gordon M. Stewart
Director of Personnel

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Attachments

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